

The applicants respectfully request that the substitute sheets of drawings, and proposed drawing corrections submitted herewith be approved by the Examiner, and that the outstanding objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Amend the specification in its entirety as follows:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Conventionally, in a narrow band excimer laser device and fluorine laser device, a slit for shaping a sectional form of laser light into a predetermined form is known, and it is disclosed, for example, in Japanese Patent No. 2531788. FIG. 13 shows a configuration of an excimer laser device according to the prior art. It should be noted that FIG. 13 is made by being reversed horizontally relative to the drawing made in the aforementioned Patent. In FIG. 13, the excimer laser device 1 is seen from above, and in the explanation hereinafter, an up and down direction of the paper surface of FIG. 13 is called a lateral direction, and a direction vertical to the paper surface is called a vertical direction.

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 1 and 2 (line 23, page 1 through line 6, page 2), with the following rewritten paragraph:

A2 In FIG. 13, an excimer laser device 1 includes a laser chamber 2 containing laser gas being a laser medium at a predetermined pressure ratio, and inside the laser chamber 2, discharge electrodes 5 and 5 are placed to oppose to each other in the aforementioned vertical direction. High voltage is applied across the aforementioned discharge electrodes 5 and 5 from a high voltage power supply not illustrated to initiate discharge, and thereby the laser medium is excited in a discharge area 18 to oscillate laser light 11.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A3 The laser light 11 excited in the laser chamber 2 is outputted from a rear window 9 toward the rear (the left side in FIG. 13), and its bandwidth is narrowed by a grating 23 so that a spectrum width of the laser light 11 become narrow. The laser light 11 with its bandwidth being narrowed enters the laser chamber 2 again from the rear window 9, and it outputted from the excimer laser device 1 through a front window 7 and a front mirror 38 to become a light source for processing of a processing unit such as a stepper or the like not illustrated.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 19, with the following rewritten paragraph:

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FIG. 14 shows a view taken along the 14-14 line in FIG. 13. It should be noted that the aforementioned lateral direction is represented as the left and right direction in FIG. 14. The illustration of the front window 7 is omitted. FIG. 15 shows a detailed configuration of the area near the front and the rear windows 7 and 9 of the excimer laser device 1.

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4 (line 25, page 3 through line 6, page 4), with the following rewritten paragraph:

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As shown in FIG. 14, both the front opening 16A and the rear opening 17A according to the prior art are narrower than the discharge area 18 in which the laser medium is excited. As a result, even if the shape of the discharge area 18 is varied as a result of consumption of the discharge electrodes 5 and 5, the laser light 11 passing through the openings 16A and 17A can obtain a stable beam form.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

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However, as a result that the openings 16A and 17A are made narrower than the discharge area 18, as shown in FIG. 15, surplus laser light 11A, which is oscillated at the outer peripheral side

Q6 of the discharge area 18 than the openings 16A and 17A, is cut by the slits 16 and 17. Thus, out of the discharge energy inputted into the discharge area 18, a part of it becomes a loss such as heat or the like and is not taken out as the laser light 11, which causes the disadvantage of reducing the efficiency of the excimer laser device 1.

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 4 and 5 (line 16, page 4 through line 1, page 5), with the following rewritten paragraph:

Q7 Further, as shown in FIG. 15, the surplus laser light 11A is outputted to areas close to the openings 16A and 17A of the slits 16 and 17. Thus, the temperature in the areas close to the openings 16A and 17A of the slits 16 and 17 rise and thereby refractive index of the gas inside the openings 16A and 17A is varied, thus causing the disadvantage of the wave surface of the laser light 11 being disturbed. Furthermore, heat occurs in the areas close to the openings 16A and 17A of the slits 16 and 17 causes the slits 16 and 17 to have heat, which causes the disadvantage that impurities occurring there stain and damage the other optical components.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 2, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Q8 Further, in the rear slit 17, as shown in FIG. 15, the rear opening 17A is made smaller than the front opening 16A. Thereby, a part 11C of the laser light 11, which is partially reflected by the front mirror 38, passes through the front opening 16A, and returns to the discharge area 18, cannot

as pass through the rear opening 17A and is cut, thus further increasing the loss.

Please insert a new paragraph at page 11, between lines 4 and 5 as follows:

99 FIG. 12 is an explanatory view showing a configuration of an excimer laser device according to yet another embodiment;

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

910 FIG. 13 is an explanatory view showing a configuration of an excimer laser device according to a prior art;

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

94 FIG. 14 is a view taken along the line 14-14 in FIG 13; and

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 9, with the following rewritten paragraph:

912 FIG. 15 is an explanatory view showing a detailed configuration of an area near a front and rear window in the excimer laser device in FIG. 13.

Please insert a new paragraph at page 23, between lines 22 and 23 as follows:

A13 In FIG. 12, the first prism 22A includes both the function of an ordinary prism and the function of an optical element for shaping a beam form of the laser light into a desired form, like the rear slit 17 in FIG. 1, and that the non-refractive portion 28 of the prism 22A is not a void such as an opening 17A of the slit. Thus, the prism 22A prevents the disadvantage where a portion of the slit close to the opening 17A is heated so as to vary the gas refractivity; thereby, the wave surface of the laser light is disturbed.
